

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10 OMB-01

SAM-01 SAJ-01 ACDA-05 EB-07 COME-00 SIL-01 LAB-04

TRSE-00 /087 W

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R 061854Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2705

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, PO

SUBJ: STATUS OF INTERSINDICAL

REF: LISBON'S 2510 AND 25180

SUMMARY: COMMUNIST PARTY DOMINATION OF INTERSINDICAL MADE EVIDENT BY EVENTS OF MAY 1. DECREE GRANTING LEGAL PERSONALITY TO INTER-SINDICAL FALLS FAR SHORT OF COMMUNIST PARTY OBJECTIVE, THE PROMULGATION OF A UNITARY LABOR LAW WITHOUT A REQUIREMENT FOR UNION ELECTIONS. IF, AS EXPECTED, LAW IS PUBLISHED WITH ELECTION PROVISIONS RETAINED, COMMUNIST CONTROL OF THE UNIONS WILL BE STRONGLY CHALLENGED BY THE SOCIALISTS. END SUMMARY.

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1. EVENTS OCCURRING AT THE MAY DAY LABOR RALLY HAVE

EMPHASIZED TO THE PUBLIC COMMUNIST PARTY (PCP) DOMINATION OF INTERSINDICAL. THE PCP CHALLENGE TO THE OTHER PARTIES ON MAY 1 WAS DEMONSTRATED BY THEIR FORCEFUL EXCLUSION OF SOCIALIST LEADER MARIO SOARES FROM THE SPEAKERS STAND, THEIR EFFECTIVE BLOCKING OF THE SOCIALIST, PPD, AND PORT WORKERS UNION CONTINGENTS FROM ENTERING THE RALLY STADIUM, AND THE PACKING OF THE STADIUM WITH PCP SUPPORTERS. THESE TACTICS HAVE PROVOKED STRONG RESENTMENT AMONG SOCIALIST RANK AND FILE, MANIFESTED IN PARTY STATEMENTS AND COUNTERDEMONSTRATIONS.

2. REASONS FOR PCP'S HARDLINE TACTICS REPORTEDLY INCLUDE PCP LEADER CUNHAL'S PIQUE AT NOT BEING PERMITTED TO ADDRESS THE MAY 1 RALLY (BLOCKED BEFOREHAND BY SOARES), AND PCP RESENTMENT AT NOT GETTING THEIR WAY ON DESIRED MODIFICATIONS TO THE FORTHCOMING UNITARY LABOR LAW. PCP REPORTEDLY WISHED THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL TO REMOVE FROM THE PROPOSED LAW PROVISIONS WHICH WOULD REQUIRE UNIONS TO HOLD ELECTIONS WITHIN 120 DAYS OF THE LAW'S PROMULGATION. THREE WELL-PLACED OFFICIALS (MINISTER OF LABOR, MINISTER FOR SOCIAL COMMUNICATION, AND PRESIDENT'S CHIEF OF STAFF) HAVE INDICATED THAT PROPOSED LAW, AS APPROVED BY REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL APRIL 30, STILL RETAINS THE ELECTION REQUIREMENT. PCP OBVIOUSLY APPREHENSIVE THAT ITS PRESENT DOMINATION OF INTERSINDICAL AND ITS IMPORTANT COMPONENT FEDERATIONS AND UNIONS WILL BE THREATENED BY ELECTORAL GAINS BY THE SOCIALISTS.

3. OTHER CHANGES IN THE PROPOSED UNITARY LABOR LAW PREVIOUSLY SOUGHT BY THE PCP INCLUDED PROVISIONS MAKING UNION MEMBERSHIP MANDATORY AND REQUIRING ALL UNIONS TO AFFILIATE WITH THE SINGLE LABOR CONFEDERATION. NEITHER OF THESE TWO PROVISIONS ARE INCLUDED IN THE TEXT REPORTEDLY APPROVED BY THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL.

4. MINISTER OF LABOR COSTA MARTINS ANNOUNCED A NEW DECREE-LAW ON APRIL 30 WHICH GIVES LEGAL PERSONALITY TO INTERSINDICAL. SOURCES IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOR CONFIRM THAT THIS DECREE, THE TEXT OF WHICH IS NOT YET PUBLISHED, IS NOT THE UNITARY LABOR LAW BUT RATHER ESSENTIALLY THE GRANTING OF LEGAL ADMINISTRATIVE STATUS TO INTERSINDICAL. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LEGAL RECOGNITION STRENGTHENS INTERSINDICAL'S CLAIM TO LEGITIMACY BUT DOES NOT, IN ITSELF, SUBSTANTIALLY ALTER OHE PRE-EXISTING SITUATION.

5. INTERSINDICAL HAS CALLED A NATIONWIDE CONGRESS FOR JUNE 28 - 29. POSSIBLE THAT THIS CONGRESS MAY BE TOUTED AS MEETING THE PROPOSED LABOR LAW'S REQUIREMENT THAT THE UNITARY CONFEDERATION BE FORMED BY A CONGRESS OF

UNIONS AND FEDERATIONS REPRESENTING MORE THAN 50 PERCENT
OF PORTUGUESE WORKERS. IN VIEW OF MAJOR REORGANIZATION
,OCCURRING IN UNIONS, WHICH ARE SHIFTING FROM AN
OCCUPATIONAL ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE TO A VERTICAL OR
INDUSTRIAL STRUCTURE, AND THE DIFFICULTY IN COMPLYING
WITH THE ELECTORAL PROCEDURES SPECIFIED BY THE
PROPOSED LAW BY THAT DATE, IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THE LABOR
CONGRESS COULD FULFILL THE REQUIREMENTS NECESSARY TO CON-
STITUTE THE UNITARY LABOR CONFEDERATION. HOWEVER, WE
EXPECT THAT THE PCP WILL PULL OUT ALL STOPS TO USE THE
LABOR CONGRESS TO INSTITUTIONALIZE ITS PRESENT CONTROL OF
INTERSINDICAL'S ORGANIZATIONAL MACHINERY.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LABOR LAW, POLITICAL PARTIES, LABOR UNIONS, COMMUNISTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975LISBON02553
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750159-0140
From: LISBON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750578/aaaactey.tel
Line Count: 128
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 LISBON'S 2510, 75 AND 2518O
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 APR 2003 by lzenbel0>; APPROVED <21 MAY 2003 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: STATUS OF INTERSINDICAL
TAGS: ELAB, PINT, PO, INTERSINDICAL, PCP
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006